Honorarium to Aanganwadi workers

1805. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased ot state:

(a) whether the Aanganwadi workers, who are poor and sole-breadwinners for their families, are still being paid a pittance of Honorarium for work stretching full day;

(b) whether the State Governments despite Centre's suggestion are unable to pay additional remuneration to Aanganwadi workers for work rendered on State projects and programmes because of funds-crunch under the State plan allocations;

(c) whether the Centre has effected an increase in the honorarium of Aanganwadi workers; if so, to what extent and from what date; and

(d) whether arrears of enhanced entitlements have been disbursed with retrospective effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI JASKAUR MEENA): (a) Under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Aanganwadi Workers and Aanganwadi Helpers are honorary workers, who are paid appropriate honoraria for their service.

(b) Many States/UTs, viz. Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Goa, Punjab, Tripura, Chandigarh, A&N Islands, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry and NCT of Delhi, are providing additional honoraria to Aanganwadi Workers and Helpers from their resources.

(c) The Central Government has increased the honoraria of Aanganwadi Workers by Rs. 500/- per month and of Aanganwadi Helpers by Rs. 240/- per month, with effect from 1.4.2002. With this increase, the honoraria of Aanganwadi Workers has become Rs. 938/- to Rs. 1063/-per month, depending upto their qualifications and experience, and the honoraria of Aanganwadi Helpers has become Rs. 500/- per month.

(d) Necessary funds, on this account, for ICDS Projects under the ICDS (General) Scheme have been released to States, and they have

been requested to disburse the arrears before the close of this financial year. Process for release of funds for World Bank-assisted ICDS Projects is underway.

Prices of NCERT text books

†1806. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to reduce the prices of new text books of NCERT; and

(b) if so, names of the States in which prices of text books of NCERT are being reduced by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Religious instructions in schools

1807. SHRI KULDIP NAYYAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to give religious instructions in schools in the country; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) is in affirmative, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) There is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

Cleanliness in South bound Trains

1808. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that South bound long distance train coaches

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.